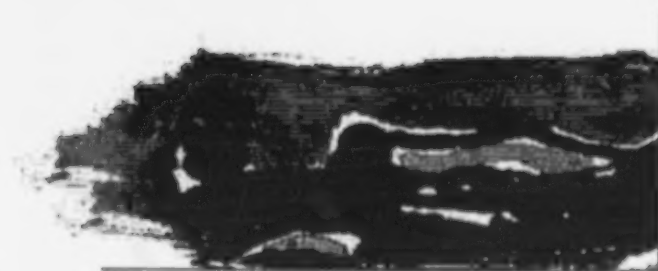




Department of Education
Strategic Plan 2011-2016:
Our Commitment to New Horizons



New Horizons

The Department of Education and its partners have focussed resources to respond to the concerns articulated in consultation processes and reports produced in the last decade. Education partners have asked for greater focus on a celebration of what is working in the system and on what needs to be done for continuous improvement for student learning and healthy communities. The Department of Education is fortunate to have engaged partners and dedicated educators who have helped guide us in strengthening the public education system and the quality of lifelong learning.

After concluding an information and recommendation gathering phase (2000-2008), the Department of Education is continuing the improvement cycle we call New Horizons, which includes planning, implementation, and monitoring phases. "New Horizons" was coined to emphasize that we are always striving for excellence and innovation. In particular, it speaks to new concepts in education and new ways of engaging Yukon communities in raising expectations and improving outcomes for students in a globalized and technological world.

Yukon is not alone in its need to adapt and change its beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions about how students learn and how to best support them. All provinces and territories in Canada are committed to continuous improvement and the evolution of education. This strategic plan outlines the significant shifts we are making in teaching practices, relationships with partners, leadership development, labour market preparation, and the commitment to monitoring and evaluation.

All photos: YG, unless otherwise stated

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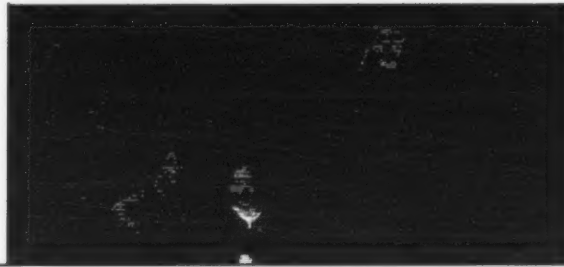


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Message from the Minister

I am very pleased to present the *Department of Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016: Our Commitment to New Horizons*. This plan describes our priorities in supporting lifelong learning in the K-12 public school system, in continuing adult education, and in labour market development. After synthesizing hundreds of recommendations from the Education Reform Project, Auditor General's Report, and comments on the draft strategic plan, we are confident that our resources and commitments will enhance the quality of curriculum and teaching, increase opportunities for post-secondary education, and effectively address our temporary and long-term labour market shortages.

At the Department of Education we are passionate about lifelong learning. Increasing student achievement through creative and critical thinking and creating engaged, socially responsible citizenship is our ultimate vision. We are hopeful that our education system will offer graduating gifts that nurture the whole child. We want to develop talented and self-confident learners who have the skills and commitment to be active global citizens, who can solve some of our most challenging socio-economic problems including: creating sustainable and green economies; working collaboratively and effectively across increasingly complex levels of governance; cultivating social inclusion in all our communities. By stimulating a desire for high quality learning experiences at all life stages, we believe we will realize this vision.

Our goal at the Department is to strive to make the education system more responsive to and reflective of the diverse needs of our learners, with

special attention to language and cultural history. We strive for and expect high achievement for each individual, whether they are an English Language Learner from our immigrant communities, Yukon First Nation, or francophone. We should expect nothing less. In a country of innovation and creativity, Yukoners are engaged and talented contributors to the arts, science, environmental, technology and business sectors. Our opportunity in the Department is to plan, reflect on and adjust our services, programs, and efforts to ensure we are supporting each learner to achieve their fullest potential.

As part of the Department's commitment to student success and achievement, the *Department of Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016: Our Commitment to New Horizons* clearly illustrates our commitment to improving the quality of the public education system and lifelong learning. With this foundation, I believe that Yukoners will be among the brightest and most innovative citizenry to solve the unique territorial, national, and international problems of our times.

Sincerely,



Patrick Rouble
Minister of Education

Message from the Deputy Minister

The Department of Education strives for excellence, innovation, and creativity in Yukon's public education system, adult learning and labour market development programs. Recognizing that supporting lifelong learning is a collective responsibility, the Department is focussed on strengthening partnerships through collaboration to enhance the quality of our education services. *The Department of Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016: Our Commitment to New Horizons* is our roadmap for the next five years and the signmakers are our students, parents, teachers, Yukon First Nations, employers, and community members.

New Horizons is a metaphor for change and evolution in Yukon's public education system. It is also a reference to the implementation phase of ideas and recommendations generated from over a decade of reports and consultations most notably the *Education Reform Project* (2008); *One Vision, Multiple Pathways Secondary School Programming Process Final Report* (2008); and the *Report of the Auditor General of Canada* (2009). While these review processes generated vigorous discussion, some strong recurring suggestions emerged. A few of these include: expect high standards; nurture the physical, emotional, social and intellectual strengths of each learner; encourage dynamic learning environments; strengthen our unique Yukon First Nation and francophone cultures and languages; reduce the performance gap between First Nation and non-First Nation students; and prepare Yukoners for the changing nature of a vibrant, northern knowledge-based economy. On our five-year horizon, we will be addressing these key issues alongside our partners in education.

The strategic plan provides a clear overview of our priorities. We are focussed on improving student achievement while strengthening learners' competencies in their chosen cultures and languages, enhancing access to post-secondary education, and supporting employees and employers to meet their career and business goals. We are also committed to better monitoring and evaluation of our programs. We will report on our progress using strong evidence and effective performance measures in our annual report each fall.

Our strategic plan communicates how we value working in partnership and collaboration. Little can be achieved by working in isolation. Significant improvements in education have come from the hard work of advisory committees and government-to-government relationships. This strategic plan is an important step in the evolution of lifelong learning in Yukon. It marks our intention to ensure our efforts are successful so that we cultivate engaged and responsible citizens who in turn will strengthen and support healthy Yukon communities.

Sincerely,



Pamela Hine
Deputy Minister of Education



Who we are: Department of Education

The Department of Education (hereafter the Department) has the responsibility under the *Education Act* to develop and approve courses of study for the public school system, provide curriculum and instructional resources, support the professional development of teachers, and evaluate the effectiveness of the public education system through the analysis of student achievement data. The Department also has the responsibility to establish adult training and continuing education programs, and more recently with an administrative transfer from the federal government, to support labour market development in Yukon.

The Department is comprised of three branches: Public Schools, Advanced Education, and Education Support Services. The Public Schools Branch provides K- Grade 12 education to over 5000 students throughout Yukon in 28 urban and rural schools, including three Catholic schools and a francophone school. In addition, alternative education is provided through the Wood Street Centre, Individual Learning Centre and the Teen Parent Centre. Additional resources are provided to school councils, the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, home-schooled students and distance education students.

Advanced Education provides support to students pursuing adult training or post-secondary education and provides specialized training programs to enhance labour market development. The branch also provides significant base funding to Yukon College and funds many other non-profit organizations to provide training and education services to adults.

Education Support Services is responsible for providing departmental branches with leadership in finance, human resources, communications, information technology and policy development. It also provides for facility and material management and student transportation services.

This strategic plan speaks to the overall direction of the Department, which encompasses the support of public education, adult training, post-secondary, and labour market development. It supports the diligent and professional work of our teachers and educational assistants who are interacting with diverse students. In particular, this plan intersects and supports the school growth process, which guides the work of administrators, school boards/ councils, teachers, and students to cultivate positive and healthy learning environments.



Our Mandate

The Department's mandate is to deliver accessible and quality education to all Yukon learners including children and adults.

To achieve this mandate the Department:

- works with learners in meaningful partnerships with all other users of the public education system to promote and support lifelong learning, and to ensure that Yukon has an inclusive and adaptive labour market, and
- works in co-operation with parents and other partners to develop the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, cultural, and aesthetic potential of learners, to the extent of their abilities, so they may become productive, responsive, and self-reliant members of society while leading personally rewarding lives in a changing world.

Our Vision

Our vision is for all Yukoners to possess:

- a desire for and appreciation of lifelong learning;
- a strong commitment to their communities; and
- the knowledge and skills needed to live meaningful, productive, and rewarding lives.

Our Values

We commit to upholding these values in our work with lifelong learners, colleagues, and education partners. These values guide how we engage, communicate, and collaborate with others and the kind of workplace culture we are creating.





Introduction

The *Department of Education Strategic Plan 2011-2016: Our Commitment to New Horizons* outlines the priorities in the next five years. In response to informative consultations and reviews, the Department has been moving ideas into action. Recognizing that the public education system and the labour market are in constant evolution, this document provides a clear map for the journey in the next five years.

Our Challenges and Opportunities

Supporting communities through lifelong learning and education is fundamental to community health and well being. Honouring the diversity of Yukon's multicultural society is central to developing a respectful and inclusive education system. The convergence of western and Yukon First Nations traditions brings both challenges and opportunities to deepen collaboration and partnerships with Yukon First Nations communities and governments in the public school system. Furthermore, the Yukon continues to attract a large and thriving francophone community, and to integrate linguistic and cultural heritage in French first and French second language programs at a number of schools. An increasingly diverse group of new immigrants and English language learners are also enriching school communities, particularly in our three Whitehorse Catholic schools. In the next five years, the Department will strengthen the integration of language, culture and heritage in an increasingly multicultural Yukon while setting high standards for student achievement.

The Department is also challenged to help skilled workers to find meaningful work in their chosen field while addressing skilled labour shortages in the retail, tourism, oil and gas, and mining sectors. Small changes in the economy can have a significant impact on labour supply and demand, given the size of our northern jurisdiction. Often it is difficult to project what economic changes may be within future months or years, thus the Department must be prepared to respond effectively depending on unpredictable fluctuations. Sustaining programs to support a diverse group of workers and employers will continue to challenge our financial and human resources.

Our Priorities in the Next Five Years

After six months of reviewing the draft strategic plan with our education partners we believe the strategic plan aligns with the needs of Yukon students, parents, First Nations, employers, and industry partners. This strategic plan outlines the challenges and opportunities and articulates the goals, objectives, key strategies and initiatives for the Department. To achieve our goals, the Department will work closely with other government departments, such as Health and Social Services, Justice and Economic Development.

Our first goal is that everyone who enters school in Yukon will have the opportunity to successfully complete their education with dignity and purpose, well prepared to enter the next phase of their lives. Areas of focus to help us improve and work toward this goal include: increased engagement with parents, families and communities; enhancing



the positive conditions for learning; and promoting critical thinking. Within these areas of focus there are key strategies or actions that the Department will undertake to achieve those objectives.

Examples of key strategies include: enhancing engagement with Yukon First Nation governments and communities to increase achievement of First Nations students and enhancing learning for all students through differentiated instruction.

Our second goal is to offer an inclusive, adaptable, and productive workforce that contributes to and strengthens the economy. Areas of focus to help us improve and work towards this goal include: increased access to high quality adult training opportunities so that Yukoners have transferable, qualified knowledge and skills; increased access to high quality Yukon and Canadian post-secondary education; and enhanced success in the transition between high school and post-secondary education and post-secondary education and the world of work.

While it is important to provide a map that explains the direction of the Department, it is essential to monitor, evaluate, and communicate our progress. Our commitment is to report on progress annually through the Department's annual report, which is tabled in the fall legislative assembly, and through the annual New Horizons Education Summit.

Our Unique Northern Context: Education Evolution and Yukon First Nations

While a more detailed history of Yukon's education system is documented elsewhere¹, it is important to provide an overview of the unique cultural and political context within which our public education system is situated. Our public education system in Yukon has significantly changed since the introduction

of the European western model in the 19th and 20th centuries, when the Government of Canada provided a segregated system of residential schools for Yukon First Nation students and day schools for non-Yukon First Nation students. This period of our Yukon history began to change in the 1950s when integrated schools began to replace the segregated system (the first in 1958 in Dawson City). However, with the inception of the integrated public school system many Yukon First Nation leaders became concerned with the achievement gap between First Nation and non-First Nation students.

Formal articulation of these concerns was outlined in a position paper on education in the appendix of *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* (1973) by the Yukon Native Brotherhood. The paper argued that the education system was not meeting the needs of Yukon First Nations and provided recommendations on how to improve the achievement and success of Yukon First Nation students. Some improvements were made after 1976, when the Government of Yukon responded to Motion 15 which asked for a statement regarding the government's policy on First Nation education.

Nonetheless, concerns among Yukon First Nation communities remained, as outlined in the *Kwiya Final Report* (1987) by the Joint Commission on Indian Education and Training. Responding to issues in both reports, the Government of Yukon introduced a new *Education Act* in 1990. A decade later (2002-2004), the government carried out a legislatively mandated review of the act. This review was followed by the *Education Reform Project* (2005-2007) which generated position papers with 207 recommendations on all aspects of the education system.

¹ Almstrom, M.E. 1991. *A Century of Schooling: Education in the Yukon 1861-1961*. Whitehorse, Yukon; *Education Reform Project Final Report* (2008). Government of Yukon and Council of Yukon First Nations. Whitehorse, Yukon.



Together Today for our Children Tomorrow (Yukon Native Brotherhood, 1973)
 Kwiya (August 1987)
 Education Act Review (2002-2004)

Education Reform Project Final Report (2008)
 One Vision, Multiple Pathways Secondary Schools Programming Process Final Report (2008)
 Helping Students Succeed (First Nations Education Advisory Committee, 2008)
 Labour Market Framework (2008)
 Report of the Auditor General of Canada (2009)

Many of the recommendations, comments, and concerns brought forward through the development of these major reports or consultation processes coalesced into a number of broad themes relating to Yukon First Nations: respect and recognition of Yukon First Nations to represent the interests of their people; a call for improved achievement among Aboriginal learners; and the need for the Government of Yukon, in partnership with Yukon First Nations, to initiate specific legislative, policy, and structural reforms of Yukon's education system.

Concerns regarding the gap in student success between First Nation and non-First Nations students are not only northern ones. In April 2008, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) made Aboriginal education a priority in their joint declaration. It is recognized that a strong public

education system must find ways to increase First Nation involvement to generate interest and confidence in the public system by First Nations learners. This has been echoed by the *Helping Students Succeed: Vision, Goals, and Priorities for Yukon First Nations Education Report* (2008) by the Yukon First Nations Education Advisory Committee.

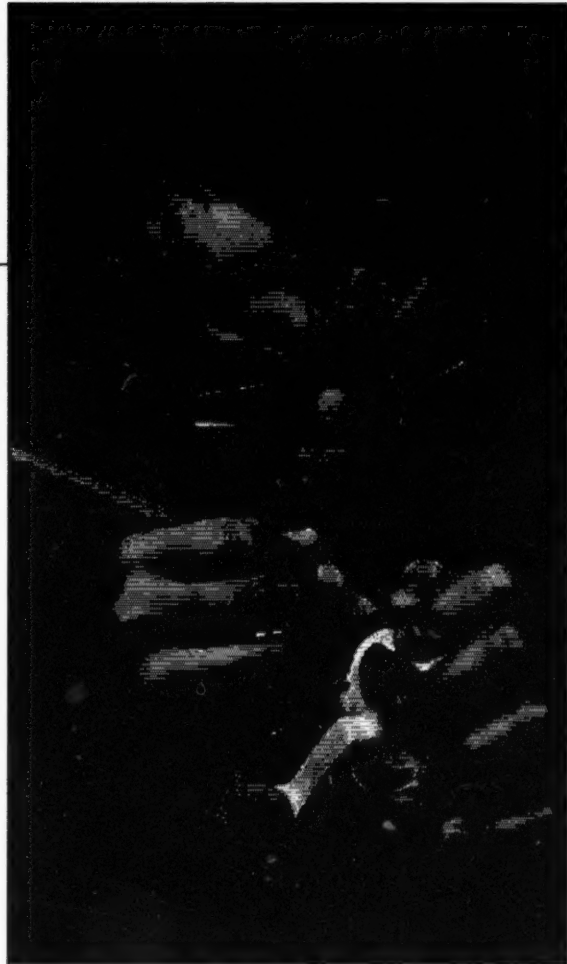
Approaching our Work Differently

The Department's strategic plan not only communicates succinct initiatives, but the key shifts that are currently underway with regard to our service delivery and core programs. Collaboration and partnership is the cornerstone of our work and these principles are being integrated at all levels of the Department, among and between senior management, administrative, teaching,

**Department of Education
Strategic Plan
2011-2016**

policy, and support teams. While it takes time for significant change to be realized, a commitment has been made to break down the internal and external boundaries that separate us and grow new relationships on a foundation that honours the learning needs of each student or lifelong learner.

Since the review of the *Education Act* in 2002-2004, the Department has articulated its commitment to collaboration and partnership. This is highlighted through the development of many new advisory committees and the school growth process. Both processes serve to share inquiry and decision making with a wider group of partners. Learning Communities are another good example of this, as is the dedication to growing leadership at all levels of the Department. In Advanced Education, collaboration and partnership helped create four



labour market strategies that address key concerns from employers and employees throughout Yukon.

This strategic plan is an expression of optimism, passion, and commitment to the unique needs of learners by outlining the goals, objectives, strategies and initiatives to which the Department is committed. An accompanying implementation plan is in place to guide the work and help us monitor our progress. The strategic plan is intended to formulate clear direction yet remain flexible to respond to emerging areas of concern over the next five years.



Environmental Scan: Challenges and Opportunities

Reflecting on the educational and labour market landscape in Yukon, it is clear that a number of challenges and opportunities influence the goals, objectives and initiatives in the strategic plan. Within the next five years the key challenges before us include: improving Yukon First Nation student achievement; increasing successful transitions for all students to different levels of education and the world of work; effectively managing resources in urban and rural schools; collaborating with Yukon First Nations governments; and proactively addressing skilled labour shortages.

Improving Outcomes for First Nation Students

As numerous reports and consultation processes have indicated, there is concern that First Nations students do not have the same academic outcomes as non-First Nations students. Evidence from standardized tests and holistic assessments from school-based teams, indicate that First Nations students have lower completion rates and lower achievement rates overall. This concern is a top priority for the Minister of Education, as emphasized in the Joint Declaration of the Council of Education Ministers, Canada in the document *Learn 2020* (2008). Over the next five years the Department will continue to prioritize resources to support First Nations students in feeling welcomed in all class environments, create new curriculum frameworks for Yukon First Nations languages and cultures, continue to support experiential programs that integrate local First Nation traditional knowledge, and to support Yukon First Nations teachers and administrators to grow into diverse leadership roles. Improving outcomes for First Nations students requires holistic

efforts to support the intellectual, social, emotional, and cognitive development of each unique learner.

Emotional and Social Challenges in Our Public Schools

The Department has received an increasing number of referrals from schools to support students with a wider range of intense learning and behavioural needs and it is expected that this trend will continue. In particular, it is during transitions (from grade to grade or moving from a rural community to Whitehorse) that children are most vulnerable. Furthermore, the *Health and Health Related Behaviours Among Young People in Yukon* (2009) study highlighted several areas of concern among Yukon youth in Grades 6-10. Emotional health and well-being for rural girls, alienation and disconnection for rural boys, as well as bullying for all learners are serious issues that impact the ability to learn. The Department has an opportunity to develop proactive initiatives, like the Rural Strategy, and utilize assessment tools (like the Early Development Instrument [EDI]), to address emotional and physical vulnerabilities so that all learners reach their potential.

Managing Resources and Changing Enrolments in Public Schools

In the next five years it is challenging but important to anticipate changes in demography and school enrolment. The Department of Education bases its projections on student enrolment data and the Yukon Bureau of Statistics population data. Natural population growth in Yukon is a relatively small component of overall population growth



which has shown growth averaging 2.2 per cent per year over the last six years. Population growth is mostly affected by in-migration from other provinces or territories and countries. One significant influence on in-migration is resource development in the mining sector. While it is difficult to project future mining projects, the Department is aware of two large developments within the next 5-10 years that could significantly impact the

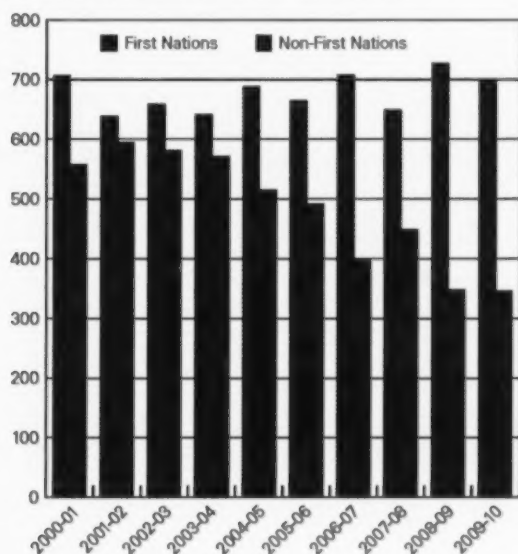
population of the territory: the Casino and the Selwyn mining projects². Given this possibility, we will monitor these developments closely.

Based on ten years of enrolment data, there are unique patterns in both rural and urban schools. In Yukon's rural schools, the total population has decreased by 17 per cent since 2000-2001 (see Graph 1). Furthermore, the First Nations population³ has remained relatively stable since this time, yet the non-First Nation population has declined. Therefore, in rural schools, the First Nation population is almost twice that of the non-First Nation population in 2010.

In our urban schools, the total student population is slowly declining, characterized by a 10 per cent loss since 2000-2001 (see Graph 2). Within this context the First Nations population is increasing in urban schools while the non-First Nations population is decreasing. In 2010-2011 the First Nations enrolment in urban schools comprises 25 per cent of the total student population. Using medium-growth projections from the Yukon Bureau of Statistics, the First Nations population in Yukon will likely demonstrate a small increase in the next five years⁴. This demographic, coupled with the increasing proportion of First Nation students in both our rural and urban schools and the sophistication of Yukon First Nations governments, will likely increase engagement by Yukon First Nations communities in the achievement rates of their children. In response to this, we will strengthen our focus on integrating Yukon First Nations culture and language in the schools, and create a network

Graph 1 | Rural Students

Number of Rural Students Enrolled for (month of October) between 2000-01 to 2009-10.



² Centre for Spatial Economics. 2010. "Yukon Occupational Modeling System Outlook". Department of Economic Development and Advanced Education Branch: Whitehorse.

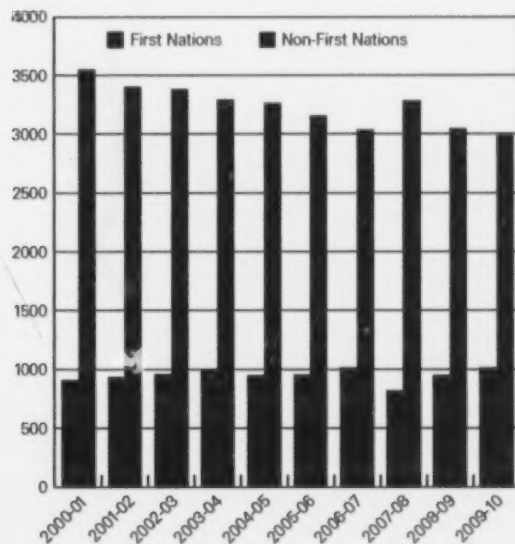
³ The Department of Education tracks student data upon registration, such as ethnicity and gender. First Nation students are not obliged to self-identify when they register for school. Therefore, Department data only reflects the numbers of First Nation students who choose to self-identify.

⁴ Yukon Bureau of Statistics. (2009) Population Projections to 2018. Whitehorse, Yukon. Yukon Bureau of Statistics / Executive Council Office.

of opportunities for First Nations parents, families and communities to be involved. The *Education Reform Project Final Report* (2008), coupled with the Yukon First Nations Education Advisory Committee report, *Helping Students Succeed: Vision, Goals, and Priorities for Yukon First Nations Education* (2008), *One Vision Multiple Pathways Secondary Schools Programming Process Final Report* (2008), and the *Report of the Auditor General of Canada* (2009) have provided concrete recommendations

Graph 2 | Urban Students

Number of Urban (Whitehorse) Students Enrolled for (month of October) between 2000-01 to 2009-10.



on enhancing programming and support for First Nations students. These consultations and reviews have provided strong direction to the Department in promoting and strengthening indigenous northern cultures and languages.

In relation to other demographic changes, it is anticipated that urban schools will receive increasing numbers of applications from new immigrant families. Immigration is increasing throughout the country, and we have seen an increase in immigration⁵ to Yukon, partly due to the success of the Yukon Nominee Program. For example, Citizenship and Immigration Canada forecasts that "Immigrants are expected to account for all net labour force growth by 2011 and for all net population growth by 2031."⁶ The increasing immigrant population will impact mostly urban schools with increased pressure on the three Catholic schools by new citizens of the Catholic faith. Many school-based staff have noted the increased need for additional English language learner support to better support new immigrants at school and at home. As requested by the Auditor General of Canada in her 2009 audit, the Department will develop a comprehensive human resource

⁵ The total numbers of both permanent and temporary residents in Yukon have almost doubled between 1999-2008 to approximately 235 individuals. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2009). *Facts and Figures. Immigration Overview. Permanent and Temporary Residents 2008* (Rep. No. Cat. no. Ci1-8/2008E-PDF). Ottawa, ON: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada.

⁶ Denton, Feaver, and Spencer (1999). *Immigration, Labour Force and the Age Structure of the Population*. Applied Research Branch, Human Resources Development Canada.



plan and action plan that addresses the differences between current resources and short and long-term staffing needs in both rural and urban schools.

As pressures on the Government of Yukon budget continue, such as increasing costs for health care, we are challenged to effectively align our budgets with rural and urban student needs. Gathering and synthesizing evidence on student needs will help us plan and allocate resources effectively. For example, a stakeholder committee made recommendations on a new staffing formula, which was implemented in the 2009-10 school year to help address resource concerns. Working together and sharing resources, where appropriate, will take creative thinking and innovative program delivery. As a guiding principle, collaboration among and between schools will be emphasized.

Furthermore, the Department has started a series of facility audits whereby all school facilities will be fully audited and a capital and maintenance repair and replacement schedule established for the next 30 years. The findings of these audits could impose additional financial pressures on the Department.

First Nation Self-Government Agreements: Assumption of Responsibility for Education

In a small jurisdiction, with multiple governance jurisdictions for education, it is essential that the learner, child or adult, is at the centre of our efforts and program initiatives. Increasingly, the Department is working within and between governments, organizations, and school boards or councils to enhance the achievement and success of lifelong learners and address performance gaps. Yukon First Nations are concerned about performance gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, and are working with their citizens to eliminate that gap. Over the next five years, we will continue to emphasize collaboration with Yukon First Nations governments to improve student achievement. The

Department is working to make the public school system an attractive choice for all Yukoners, while recognizing that self-governing First Nations have the right to assume responsibility for education. The Department is increasing its support for community-driven initiatives, and has invested in a number of initiatives to strengthen our partnership with Yukon First Nations and to ensure that the public school system meets the needs of all students.

New Technologies and the 21st Century Learner

Yukon Department of Education's level of connectivity, strong support for learning technologies and programming has provided a learning environment in our schools where learners are increasingly using existing and new technologies for research, communication and collaboration. Increased sophistication of technologies, powerful software applications, and the growth and access to wireless networks influence the need for strong media literacy skills to support the 21st century learner.

The information landscape and the vast amount of information available at our fingertips challenge the traditional notion of education. For example, interactive whiteboards allow for teachers to move from traditional modes of classroom instruction to one where students can be more engaged and where feedback on lessons learned is immediate. Furthermore, the availability of huge volumes of content is transforming what it means to be an educated person in a digital world. Students today need to know how, where and when to locate information, from a variety of media, and they must possess skills to access, evaluate, synthesize, create and present new knowledge in a variety of forms.



New technologies are changing the way we think, learn, work and communicate. The 21st century learners in Yukon have access to a multitude of technologies and resources that will help prepare them with the skills to thrive in their chosen fields and to continue to 'learn how to learn' throughout their lifetimes.

Changing Labour Market

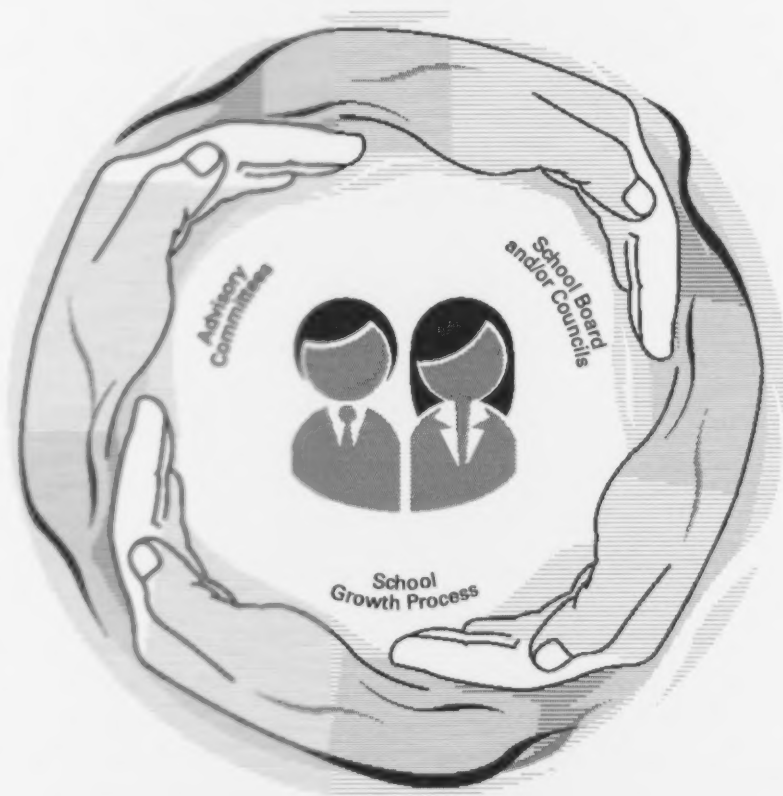
As a northern jurisdiction, relatively small changes in the local labour market can have a significant impact on Yukon's economy. Key challenges in strengthening the economy include successfully supporting unemployed individuals, apprentices, and workers to access continuing education through training, comprehensive skill development, and employment opportunities. Developing effective ways to increase the representation of under-represented groups in the labour force, including First Nations, youth, women, people with disabilities and immigrants is also a challenge. Given the potential of mining, tourism and oil and gas development, there will likely be major skill shortages in Yukon in coming years. Yukon's small population will not meet the labour market needs for

large projects. Canada's aging workforce will increase pressure and demand for skilled workers across the country as people retire at increasing rates. The challenge is to find practical and effective solutions to skilled labour shortages for a diverse group of Yukon employers. Through the development of the Labour Market Framework, and its accompanying strategies, the focus will be on training, recruitment and retention, and collecting high quality labour market information to assist in decisions intended to proactively support employees and employers. At the same time, Yukon has to be prepared for possible recessions and higher unemployment levels than have been experienced in the past several years. Consequently, the Labour Market Framework strategies have been designed to be adaptable to rapid changes in the local economy and labour market by having action plans that will be reviewed regularly.

To be more responsive and strategic in our initiatives, the Department has prepared a five year strategic plan that synthesizes numerous recommendations into Department goals, objectives and initiatives. In addition, the Department has established key performance indicators to track how we are progressing toward improved student achievement and labour force development.



Partnering to Make a Difference in Public Schools



The Department is committed to partnership and collaboration by sharing decision making with a broader group of engaged partners. Through the feedback from the *Education Reform Project Final Report* (2008), *One Vision, Multiple Pathways* *Secondary School Programming Process Final*

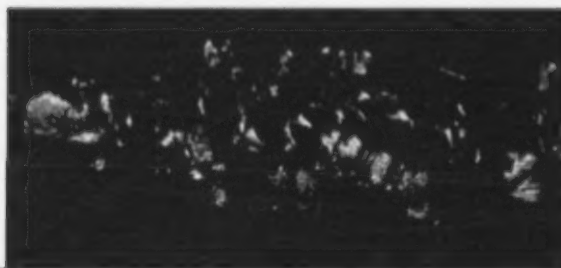
Report (2008), and *Helping Students Succeed* (2008), it was clear that our partners in education value the opportunity to have input on decisions that will impact students and lifelong learners. There are many ways to get involved.



Partnering to Make a Difference in Advanced Education



The Department is committed to partnership and collaboration by sharing decision making with a broader group of engaged partners. In Advanced Education, we are working closely with partners on Labour Market Strategies and post-secondary education to enhance the qualifications of Yukoners for an adaptive and productive labour market.



Graduating Gifts



At the 2010 New Horizons Education Summit, more than 100 education partners worked together to identify the graduating gifts we want our students to have when they leave the public school system. The gifts are holistic and encompass emotional, social, intellectual, and physical strengths.



Goal 1

Everyone who enters school in Yukon will have the opportunity to successfully complete their education with dignity and purpose, well prepared to enter the next phase in their lives.

G1: Objective 1

To increase engagement of parents, families, and communities for the purpose of improving student achievement and success.

Strategy 1

Engage parents, learners, and community partners in the planning and monitoring of conditions for learning and student achievement in all schools.

Initiatives

- School Growth Process
- Rural Strategy
- Strengthening School Boards and School Councils
- Community Engagement
- Supporting Advisory Committees

Strategy 2

Engage Yukon First Nations governments and communities to enhance the success of First Nations students.

- Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Action Plan
- Yukon First Nation Education Advisory Committee (YFNEAC)

G1: Objective 2

To promote a positive, inclusive and responsive learning environment that contributes to the success of each learner and ensures continuous improvement.

Strategy 1

Integrate and support languages and cultures to connect learners to our rich history and contemporary Yukon.

- Yukon First Nations Languages and Cultural Framework
- French First Language
- French Second Language
- English Language Learners

Strategy 2

Develop and strengthen the social and emotional skills of each learner.

- Early Years Transition Initiative
- Resiliency in Transitions
- Social Responsibility and Citizenship
- Environmental Stewardship

Strategy 3

Enhance support for vulnerable learners.

- Enhancing equitable access and accountability in Special Programs
- Individual Education Plans
- Educational Assistants

Strategy 4

Develop innovative, learner-focused leadership at all levels.

- Human Resources Plan
- Building Leadership Capacity
- Learning Communities

G1: Objective 3

Develop and enhance critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication as foundational competencies to support learning in the 21st century.

Strategy 1

Develop and deliver relevant curriculum learning outcomes that are reflective and responsive to our Yukon learners, cultures and languages.

- Yukon Essential Learning Outcomes
- Locally Developed Curriculum
- Secondary School Program Review
- Secondary School Trades and Apprenticeship Initiative

Strategy 2

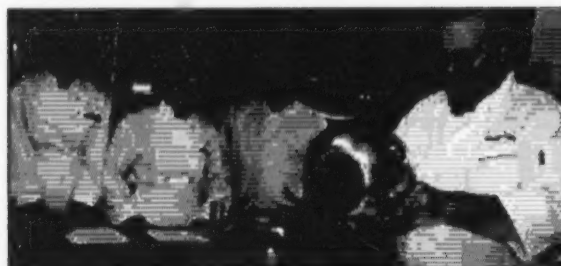
Collect, analyze and use evidence and assessment to help move learners to their best potential in all programs.

- Assessment and Reporting
- Yukon Student Information System

Strategy 3

Support differentiated instruction to improve student's achievement in all programs.

- Literacy Framework
- Experimental Education
- Distributed Learning



Goal 2

Yukon has an inclusive, adaptable, and productive workforce that contributes to and strengthens the economy.

G2: Objective 1

Increase access to high quality adult training opportunities so that Yukoners have qualifying and transferable skills and competencies.

Strategy 1

Improve essential skills and trades training programs.

Strategy 2

Develop high quality apprenticeship opportunities that meet the needs of Yukon employers.

Initiatives

- Supporting Adult Literacy
- Skills Enhancement
- Women and Apprenticeship
- Evaluate the Yukon Apprentice Training Program

G2: Objective 2

Increase access to high quality post-secondary education.

Strategy 1

Encourage the development of northern specific programming.

Strategy 2

Reduce financial barriers to higher learning programs.

Strategy 3

Enhance smooth transitions between high school and post-secondary education and between education and the world of work.

- Supporting Yukon College

- Designation Process
- Review Yukon Grant Criteria

- Student Training and Employment Program (STEP)
- Summer Career Placement (SCP)
- Youth in Transition Survey
- Yukon Youth Connections Program
- Student Exit Survey

G2: Objective 3

Identify and increase local opportunities to fill temporary and long-term market shortages.

Strategy 1

Facilitate and synthesize timely, accurate and relevant information on training and program needs to address labour market needs.

Strategy 2

Aid Yukon employers to attract and retain suitable employees through strategic recruitment and retention initiatives.

Strategy 3

Increase access to comprehensive training and trades initiatives.

Strategy 4

Support a responsive and sustainable approach to Yukon immigration.

- Generate and update labour market information
- Increase the awareness and accessibility of labour market information

- Improve Yukon employers' access to information/tools to support their ability to retain employees

- Community Training Funds
- Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA)
- Labour Market Agreement (LMA)

- Promotion of Yukon as Immigration Destination
- Foreign Credential Recognition
- Yukon Nominee Program



Lifelong Learning

Throughout the public school system, students will make many transitions. Some will make the transitions smoothly, and others will encounter more difficulty. Significant transitions include entering school (either Pre-K or Kindergarten), from Grade 3 to Grade 4, from elementary school to high school, from Grade 9 to Grade 10, and high school to post-secondary or the world of work (Grade 12). Moving from a rural to an urban school is another key transition.

The Department is focussed on increasing supports prior to and through these transition periods. Support is holistic and integrated, including building the intellectual, social, emotional and cognitive strengths of each learner. In the early primary years, the Department is focussed on understanding the unique strengths and challenges of each learner. Our Kindergarten database helps us to understand some of the challenges in language and general knowledge, and the Early Development Instrument (EDI) helps us to understand what different groups of students need, depending on the school. School based teams provide informed and effective interventions for those identified as needing additional supports.

As students develop learning to learn behaviours through a range of experiential and academic environments, the Department is interested in understanding how students are doing by the end of primary school (Grade 3). It is here that significant gaps in literacy may be revealed between students. As students move into Grades 4-6, where there is a more structured approach, the Department wants to ensure that educators are using differentiated instruction and research to support the individual needs of each student.

Key Transitions

**From Home
to School**

**From
Grade 3 to 4**

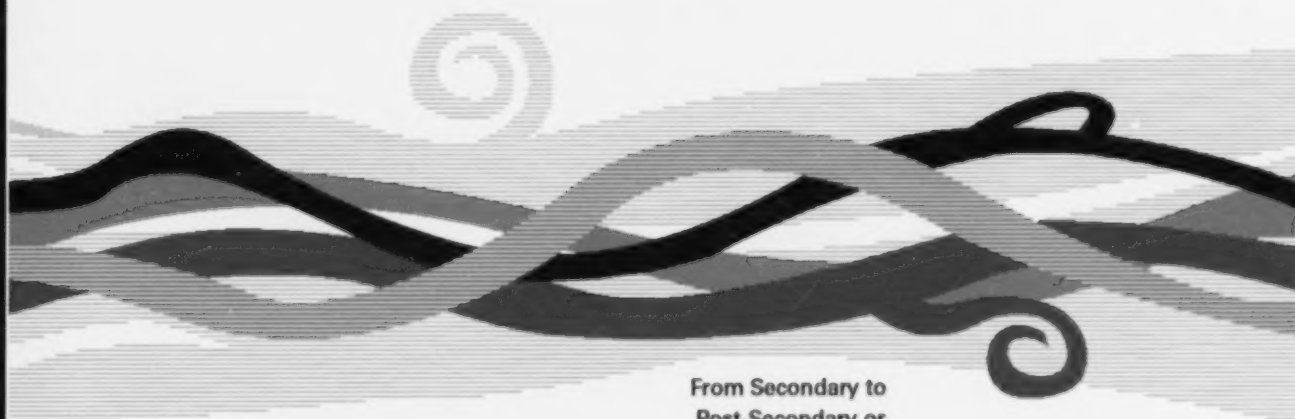
**From Elementary
to High School**

**From Grade 9 to 10
(often from Rural
to Urban)**



After the middle years, students then make the transition to high school in either Grade 8 or Grade 9. Increased academic rigor and regular standardized testing characterizes the last three years in the public school system to prepare for post-secondary education or workplace learning. Yukon College and other partners are working with the Department to identify barriers to the transition out of public school and to put in place effective supports.

No matter what the transition, enhancing student engagement and supporting student autonomy in the learning journey is essential. The Department is committed to providing a positive, safe and welcoming environment in all schools so each student can achieve their potential.



From Secondary to
Post-Secondary or
World of Work



GOAL 1: Everyone who enters school in Yukon will have the opportunity to successfully complete their education with dignity and purpose, well prepared to enter the next phase of their lives.

Performance Indicators

We will measure our progress on this goal by tracking the following performance indicators for all students, including sub-groups of students, such as rural and urban, boys and girls, First Nation and non-First Nation citizens:

- graduation/completion rates
- report cards and formative classroom and school level data
- attendance information
- transition rates
- satisfaction and Yukon youth exit surveys
- course pass/fail rates
- standardized assessments

Data and evidence for these performance indicators will be reported annually through the Department's annual report, which is tabled in the legislature each year. Although this is not an exhaustive list, these performance indicators will help us track our progress in the public school branch and give us a good understanding of who is succeeding and who needs additional supports. In 2010-11 we will have baseline data for this set of indicators and will monitor how we progress. The Department is concerned about improving the quality and depth of learning. One of the most effective ways to monitor and evaluate student achievement growth is through formative assessment in the classroom. A good example of this is conducting the DART and SchoolWide Writes assessments in all schools.

Objective 1: To increase engagement of parents, families, and communities for the purpose of improving student achievement and success

Students succeed when partners work together as a community. As a system we must nurture and encourage the engagement of parents, families and communities, so that more decisions can be shared. By collectively supporting lifelong learners through positive conditions for learning, students will thrive and achieve to the best of their abilities. Partnerships, especially with Yukon First Nation communities, are a cornerstone of this work and must be fostered if goals are to be realized.

Key Strategies

- 1.1.1 Engaging parents, learners, and community partners in the planning and monitoring of conditions for learning and student achievement in all schools**

School Growth Process

The purpose of the school growth process is to improve student learning. The school growth process is founded on the principles of inquiry, collaboration and respect for the social and cultural diversity in Yukon. All schools undertake annual school growth planning, with a diverse school growth planning team. Key to the process is the improvement of classroom practice based on the examination of a variety of evidence. A collaborative evaluation



process is used with school board/council trustees and members, First Nations representatives, parents, students, teachers and school administrators to plan and set goals for improved student performance. The evaluation process takes place throughout the year leading to improved student achievement for all students in all areas of study. The Department's role is to assist schools in the collection and analysis of evidence of student performance and provide training and support to school growth process teams, school boards/councils and communities. Furthermore, the Department ensures that the actions outlined in the school growth plan and the recommendations from school reviews are implemented and lead to improvement. Beginning in 2010, all schools will be on a continuous school review cycle every three years and schools are expected to respond to the recommendations in their annual school plans.

Rural Strategy

In recognition of the unique needs and challenges in Yukon rural communities, the Department will work with our partners to develop strategies to address the needs of rural learners to ensure that they are supported throughout their educational career. Specifically we will examine the diversity and flexibility of program offerings, course delivery and scheduling. The Department will explore models of career planning as well as best practices around effective transition to work and post-secondary school, and effective community, business and First Nations partnerships. In the process, we hope to increase completion rates and provide improved access to post-secondary training and career opportunities for rural students.

Strengthening School Boards and School Councils

School boards and councils are essential structures within each school to encourage the participation of parents and community members in discussions and decisions regarding student well-being and school programming. Members provide advice to

the Department regarding resources and support needed for each school. School board trustees and school council members are part of the school growth process and participate in many of the Department's advisory committees. The Department provides training and support through two annual conferences and policy development. Over the next few years, the Department is focussed on strengthening and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of school boards and councils and providing training to support participation in the school growth process.

Community Engagement

Beyond the school growth process, schools need to better engage with Yukon First Nation communities to build a vision for lifelong learning. Using an appreciative inquiry approach, the Department will be piloting two projects over the next three years to develop an understanding of community-wide learning needs that will guide a comprehensive strategy for addressing them, both in the public school and adult learning contexts.

Supporting Advisory Committees

From the *Education Reform Project Final Report* (2008), it was clear that Yukoners wanted more meaningful input into the public education system on an ongoing basis. The Department has developed





a comprehensive infrastructure of advisory committees to include community perspectives on new and significant projects. These committees are developed to increase the active participation of community members as part of a collaborative process to develop true learning communities.

1.1.2 Engage Yukon First Nations governments and communities to enhance the success of First Nations students

Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Action Plan

Addressing the disparity in achievement between First Nation and non-First Nation learners in Yukon is a priority for all levels of government in Yukon. A memorandum of understanding and a joint action plan between the Council of Yukon First Nations, individual Yukon First Nations, Government of Yukon and Government of Canada is being developed to define the roles and responsibilities of all parties in order to advance student achievement and success for First Nation learners.

Yukon First Nation Education Advisory Committee (YFNEAC)

The Department is committed to ensuring that Yukon First Nations' perspectives, resources, and practices are appropriately and accurately reflected in Public Schools Branch programming. The YFNEAC provides technical guidance, support and recommendations related to Yukon First Nation education to the Department. The committee also advises on how Yukon First Nations perspectives and knowledge can be incorporated in the programs of the Public School Branch. The committee provides a regular forum for First Nations to have input into the public school system. It also allows the Department to better align its work with Yukon First Nations' goals and objectives. The YFNEAC advises the Department, Council of Yukon First Nations leadership and Yukon First Nations communities.

Objective 2: To promote a positive, inclusive and responsive learning environment that contributes to the success of each learner and ensures continuous improvement

The Department strives to support positive and challenging learning environments so that our learners are encouraged to take risks, make mistakes, and try again while feeling supported.

Key Strategies

1.2.1 Integrate and support languages and cultures to connect learners to our rich history and contemporary Yukon

Yukon First Nation Languages and Cultural Framework

The Department will develop a K-12 First Nation Languages and Cultural Framework to better support innovative program initiatives that are focussed on enhancing Yukon First Nation languages and cultures. One example is Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, in collaboration with the Department, are developing a K-12 bilingual and bi-cultural Southern Tutchone language framework and a draft Kindergarten curriculum.

French First Language

The Department supports the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon in providing an educational environment for francophone Yukoners to ensure that their unique linguistic and cultural assets are supported and enriched. The Department and the Commission are currently working to clarify the administrative relationship between the Department and the school board, the school board's role, and its responsibilities.

French Second Language

The Department recognizes the value of being fluent in Canada's two official languages. A thorough French second language review has been completed. Its recommendations will guide the work to promote French as a second language in elementary and secondary schools over the next five years. The next step is working with partners to review the recommendations and establish strategic goals, objectives and priorities to increase student enrolment in French second language programs and enhance language proficiency.

English Language Learners

Due to increasing immigration to Yukon there are more English language learners entering our schools throughout the academic year. Supporting English language learners in and outside the classroom requires specialized resources including trained and qualified instructors, curriculum resources, and additional language interventions. The Department will develop a comprehensive strategy to address the holistic needs of English language learners in schools to ensure they can meet their full potential.

1.2.2 Develop and strengthen the social and emotional skills of each learner

Early Years Transition Initiative

This initiative targets pre-Kindergarten to Grade 3 students by identifying learning vulnerabilities and easing transitions between pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten. The Department began piloting a parent-child pre-Kindergarten early learning program at Selkirk Elementary School in spring 2010. As well, a Yukon-wide welcome-to-Kindergarten program, *Stepping into Kindergarten*, was initiated in May 2010. Over the next five years, new assessment and intervention tools, including the Early Development Instrument (EDI), will be available in all schools. With the EDI, educators will be able to identify five domains of early development that affect the success



of regional student populations, including: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills and general knowledge.

Resiliency in Transitions

All students require support to build the resiliency needed to handle the many transitions they make as lifelong learners. Transitions are times of change and possible adversity. Key transitions in formal education include the transitions from home to school, from Grade 3 to 4, from elementary to high school, from Grade 9 to 10, from high school to post-secondary and/or the world of work and from a rural to urban community. The Department will continue to work collaboratively with families, communities, school staff and students to promote and increase the resiliency of all students.

Social Responsibility and Citizenship

Social responsibility is an important asset for each learner. By engaging students in self-assessment, we work towards developing a commitment and interest in social responsibility. Aspects of this include sharing responsibility for the social and physical environment, solving problems in peaceful ways, valuing diversity and defending human rights, and exercising democratic rights and responsibilities. The Department is examining the British Columbia social responsibility performance standards to develop a rubric for changing the direction of student learning to global citizenship.



Environmental Stewardship

Increasing environmental stewardship in our learning and operations is a priority for the Department. Students need the knowledge and critical thinking skills to contribute to a sustainable future through their actions and be prepared to thrive in the emerging green economy. The Department has created a new environmental stewardship coordinator position to engage school communities as we green our buildings and operations and enhance environmental stewardship learning in and outside our classrooms. The Department will develop a comprehensive green school program that combines and connects improvements in our facility operations with student participation and learning. Furthermore, training and apprenticeship programs will be reviewed and adjusted to ensure that Yukon workers have the knowledge and skills to succeed in the 21st century green economy.

1.2.3 Enhance support for vulnerable learners

Enhancing Equitable Access and Accountability in Special Programs

The Department offers assessments, interventions and special supports to students with special needs through the Special Programs unit. The goal in the next five years is to strengthen the Department's equitable service for all learners. In particular, the Department will emphasize new accountability mechanisms to ensure that identified students are getting appropriate resources that meet their needs. For example, the Special Programs unit will be making services available based on documentation related to pyramid of intervention strategies such as referrals from school based teams, recommendations, and duly prepared Individual Education Plans. Furthermore, the revised *Special Programs Handbook* will provide clear and transparent guidelines on how to access services.

Individual Education Plans

The Department has created a new and improved format for Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Satisfying the concerns from the auditor general's report, the Department will establish a new system for auditing IEPs to ensure that they are current, completed, include measurable goals and objectives, and are actively being followed. This system will aid the Special Programs unit in better aligning their resources to support the needs of individual learners. Accompanied by professional development training for Learning Assistance teachers, the review of the IEP system will help improve learning outcomes for students and provide a more reliable tool for educators and school-based teams to track learning progress.



Educational Assistants

The Department will review its educational assistant allocations to ensure that students with the highest needs are receiving the intensive support required. The Department will also improve the allocation process for Level 1 and 2 educational assistants. In addition, the Department will continue to provide ongoing training to ensure that educational assistants are well prepared to meet the needs of their assignments.

1.2.4 Develop innovative, learner-focussed leadership at all levels

Human Resources Plan

How we treat people reflects what we stand for. Understanding and strategically aligning resources, such as learning assistance teachers, educational assistants, or counselors, to plan for short- and long-term staffing needs in all rural and urban schools is essential to meet the needs of our students. The Department is developing a comprehensive human resources plan to address our challenges in providing skilled educators in all of our schools with human resource practices that reflect the core values of the Department.

Building Leadership Capacity

In an ever-changing educational milieu, educators have always needed ongoing professional development to have the skills to carry out their roles. Current leadership initiatives include the Yukon Educational Leadership Program, the Masters in Education Leadership, and support for Yukon First Nations languages training with Simon Fraser University. A long-term commitment has been made to support leadership growth by developing a three-to-five year leadership plan for administrators focussed on instructional leadership, assessment for



learning, and promoting innovation and understanding of current theory and practice. The plan will be based on a leadership standards document that will be prepared in the 2010-11 school year.

Learning Communities

Learning communities are committed groups of teachers, administrators, parents, and students who work together to promote shared leadership, collaborative work and ongoing learning to support improved student success. Learning communities have a commitment to collective inquiry and turning new learning and insights into action. Learning communities are committed to continuous improvement with a focus on assessment data and results. Over the next five years, learning communities will be in place at each school, at all levels of teaching and administration and aligned with the school growth plan.





Objective 3: Develop and enhance critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication as foundational competencies to support learning in the 21st century

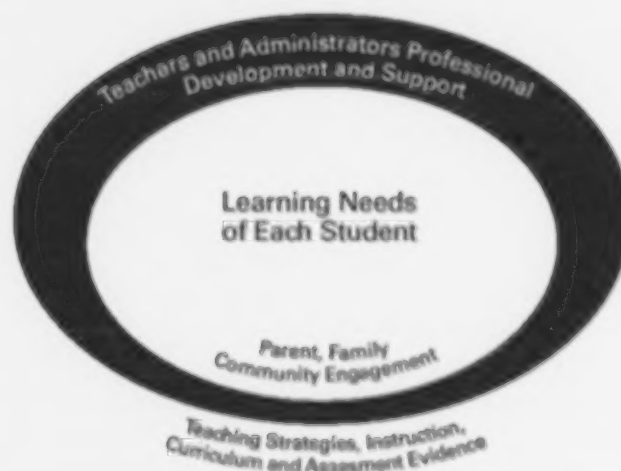
The 21st century definition of literacy is the ability to identify, comprehend and communicate in oral and written languages, and increasingly through the use of media technology. The Department wants Yukon learners to develop both critical thinking skills and inquiry processes which are indicators that learners have high levels of literacy. Second languages and new digital technologies are integral to a comprehensive literacy program in our public school system in order to help students be contributing and successful citizens in a globalized world.

Key Strategies

- 1.3.1 Develop and deliver relevant curriculum learning outcomes that are reflective and responsive to our Yukon learners, cultures and languages

Yukon Essential Learning Outcomes

In the next five years, a review of the K-12 curriculum will take place to identify the essential core competencies needed in language arts and mathematics. This review will help ensure all Yukon students are moving from grade to grade with the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes required to be successful in these key subject areas.



Locally Developed Curriculum

School communities are entitled under the *Education Act* to develop local curriculum. However, local curriculum may not address the learning outcomes required to gain graduation credits. In order to get credit for a course, all new material will be reviewed and approved through the Department's curricula process. Our Curriculum and First Nations Programs and Partnerships units are working with schools and Yukon First Nations communities to develop cultural materials and experiences to ensure that learners are meeting curriculum learning outcomes. This initiative will greatly benefit students through the ongoing development of Yukon First Nations languages and cultures in our schools.

Secondary School Program Review

The *One Vision, Multiple Pathways* report (2008) informed the development of secondary school programming over the next five years and that information has guided the design process for the new F. H. Collins School. One of the innovative programs that will be part of the new F. H. Collins School, and in future schools across the Yukon, is secondary school learning communities. This model allows for integrated curriculum rather than stand-alone courses where students will have the opportunity to collaborate and work independently. Department staff will rely on the information in the secondary school program review as it implements school-based learning communities in all Yukon schools.

Secondary School Trades and Apprenticeship Initiative

The *One Vision, Multiple Pathways* report (2008) highlighted the importance of valuing the skilled trades and aligning school-based courses with work-based training. The Public Schools Branch will take the lead responsibility to strengthen technical vocational education in secondary schools by emphasizing high expectations, collaboration,



and active learning in a rigorous academic program with an enhanced guidance and advisor system. The Department will initiate three trade targeted secondary programs by 2016, along with increased promotion and career counselling for students and parents related to apprenticeship.

1.3.2 Collect, analyze and use evidence and assessment to help move learners to their best potential in all programs

Assessment and Reporting

Meaningful assessment and diagnostic practices are necessary to inform instruction and programming and are related to essential learning outcomes. The Department is adopting early assessment practices that can identify targeted interventions, allow students to track their own progress, and enable teachers to meet individual student needs.





The Department has developed an assessment framework for K-12 that will guide a three-year implementation plan. The framework will be fully developed by fall 2011. It will refine assessment practices in the classroom and help develop comprehensive plans for reducing achievement gaps for sub-groups of students.

Yukon Student Information System

A comprehensive student information system provides teachers, administrators and department staff the information needed to make evidence-based decisions for student programming. In September 2009 the Department began the implementation of YSIS, Yukon's Student Information System. YSIS will provide a demographic profile of students and the data needed to track attendance, and generate report cards. Furthermore, it will provide individual students with a report outlining credits earned and credit hours required to complete their graduation program.

1.3.3 Support differentiated instruction to improve student's achievement in all programs

Literacy Framework

The acquisition of high quality literacy skills is essential in a knowledge-based economy. A broad range of critical thinking, interpretation, evaluative and communication skills are essential for learners at all stages of life. The Department will prioritize excellence in literacy by developing a coherent departmental vision and strategy to support the acquisition of lifelong literacy skills. Furthermore, in order to support differentiated instruction in literacy and numeracy, with an emphasis on the development of media literacy skills, the Department has developed a literacy framework. The framework focuses on professional

development including learning communities and literacy teams, assessment for learning, among other practices, to increase the literacy skills of all learners. The literacy framework reflects the interdisciplinary nature of literacy skill development.

Experiential Education

In experiential education a student constructs knowledge, value and skill from direct experience. It can be instructed from within and outside the classroom, making use of a diversity of learning environments. A number of Yukon's experiential programs, such as Music Arts and Drama (MAD) and Achievement, Challenge, Environment, Service (ACES) provide practical, hands-on experience for students in social studies, science, or artistic curricula. The Department has developed a new experiential program with Yukon First Nation perspectives, history and culture, called CHAOS 9 (Community, Heritage, Adventure, Outdoor and Skills), commencing January 2011. The Department will continue to support the application and integration of experiential teaching strategies in all Yukon classrooms, thus making experiential education available to all students. The review of existing programs to ensure learning outcomes are met for current experiential initiatives is an ongoing priority.

Distributed Learning

The Department's Distributed Learning Program provides secondary students with enhanced course offerings and flexibility in their programming through enrolment in courses offered through various distance education schools in BC. Each rural community school is equipped with a video conferencing suite where students can participate in courses offered in other Yukon schools. Over the next three years, our goal is to reduce the number of enrolments in distance education schools and deliver more Yukon-based programming to students through the use of video conferencing.



GOAL 2: Yukon has an inclusive, adaptable, and productive workforce that contributes to and strengthens the economy.

Performance Indicators

The following performance indicators will help us measure our progress on this goal, with particular attention to under-represented groups (including women, First Nations citizens, youth, people with disabilities, immigrants):

- number and percentage of individuals who received journey level certification
- number of employers accessing the Yukon nominee program
- position vacancy rates through the annual business survey

The following performance indicators are currently tracked under the Labour Market Agreement:

- proportion of eligible clients who have completed their intervention, by intervention type
- number of eligible clients who have earned credentials or certification through participation in the intervention
- proportion of eligible clients who, at various intervals throughout the first year following the intervention, are employed
- average hourly earnings of eligible clients following the intervention

By 2012 the Department will have a new comprehensive database for the Labour Market Development Agreement. Providing it is feasible,

in 2013 it is planned that the second set of performance indicators noted above will be collected for all program areas using the new database.

Data and evidence for these performance indicators will be reported annually through the Department's annual report, which is tabled in the legislature each year. Although this is not an exhaustive list, these performance indicators will help us track our progress for programs administered by Advanced Education. There are many interrelated factors that affect the Department's ability to strengthen the labour market, such as the economy, employment status (such as seasonal work), the multiple barriers certain clients face, and the accessibility and quality of data the Department receives from third parties.

Objective 1: Increase access to high quality adult training opportunities so that Yukoners have qualifying and transferable skills and competencies

The Department provides training programs that integrate education with employment, with a particular focus on increasing the representation of traditionally under-represented groups such as youth, women, immigrants, and people with disabilities. By encouraging a diversity of training opportunities, the Department will be able to nurture interest in lifelong learning and strengthen the competencies and qualifications of Yukon's labour force.



Key Strategies

2.1.1 Improve essential skills and trades training programs

Supporting Adult Literacy

As a key component in adult education in a knowledge-based economy, the Department will prioritize excellence in literacy by developing a coherent departmental vision and strategy to support lifelong literacy skills. In addition, the Department will continue to provide funding and resources to Yukon College and non-profit organizations which facilitate skill development in literacy, which goes beyond reading, writing, and arithmetic. The Department strives to support ongoing acquisition of key competencies in all forms of written and oral communication, including technological mediums, so that Yukoners will be able to understand and use a diversity of communication tools in their everyday lives and participate in the development of society.

Skills Enhancement

Skills enhancement plays an important role in improving productivity and capacity of the labour force and maintaining competitiveness of the Yukon economy nationally and internationally. Increasing essential skills levels and trades qualifications, including those who are under-represented in the workforce, will increase the quality of the Yukon work force and help to increase Yukon's standard of living.

2.1.2 Develop high quality apprenticeship opportunities that meet the needs of Yukon employers

Women and Apprenticeship

In response to the program evaluation of Yukon Women Trades and Technology (YWITT), the Department will implement strategies and funding opportunities to increase access to programs for women desiring to enter non-traditional trades programming and work. This initiative will improve the economic security for Yukon women and increase workplace culture diversity in the trades sector.

Evaluate the Yukon Apprentice and Certification Training Program

The Yukon Apprenticeship and Certification Program has grown significantly over the past five years with the increased participation of Yukon employers. Working with the Apprenticeship Advisory Board, industry, labour, educational institutions and our clients we will review the program to ensure it meets the needs of the current labour market and develop a mechanism to ensure future needs will be considered.





Objective 2: Increase access to high quality post-secondary education

A key component in lifelong learning is the opportunity to attend a high quality post-secondary institution. The Department of Education promotes Yukon College as a northern choice for higher learning as the college offers select degrees, university transfers, pre-employment trades, certificates or diplomas, and basic continuing education and training. Furthermore, the Department supports increased access to post-secondary education by providing financial assistance to Yukon students. Of particular concern is the transition between secondary school and post-secondary institutions. Focussing resources on this transition period will help more students gain access to higher learning opportunities.

Key Strategies

2.2.1 Encourage the development of northern specific programming

Supporting Yukon College

The Department will continue to support Yukon College's new degree granting capacity and degree development initiatives and transferable programs with other post-secondary institutions. New programs such as the Bachelor of Science in Environmental and Conservation Sciences, the First Nations Governance and Public Administration Program, and the Heritage and Culture Certificate Program are three examples of recent programming initiatives that provide unique northern perspectives in environmental and social science. The Yukon Research Centre of Excellence and the Institute of Social Justice also provide training and research programs to address specific regional needs.

2.2.2 Reduce financial barriers to higher learning programs

Designation Process

When an educational institution is designated Yukon students are eligible for student financial assistance. Currently, the designation process involves additional steps that are sometimes cumbersome, which delays funding approval for the student. We will work toward a more transparent and effective process to eliminate delays in approving student funding.

Review Yukon Grant Criteria

Current Yukon Grant funding is often not available for adult learners because residency requirements are tied to Yukon secondary school participation. We want to consider opening student financial assistance to long-time Yukon residents who did not participate in Yukon secondary schools, to create a more inclusive funding program for adult learners.





2.2.3 Enhance smooth transitions between high school and post-secondary education and between education and the world of work

Student Training and Employment Program (STEP)

STEP provides funding for summer employment opportunities for Yukon post-secondary students and recent graduates working with Yukon employers in their chosen field of study. Youth unemployment rates are still significant, both nationally and in Yukon. The Department will continue to review the program annually to ensure it meets both employers' and students' needs.

Summer Career Placement (SCP)

This program funds employment opportunities for youth and students into seasonal work. The Department will continue to monitor the program to ensure effective use of funds provided to employers using the program.

Youth in Transition Survey

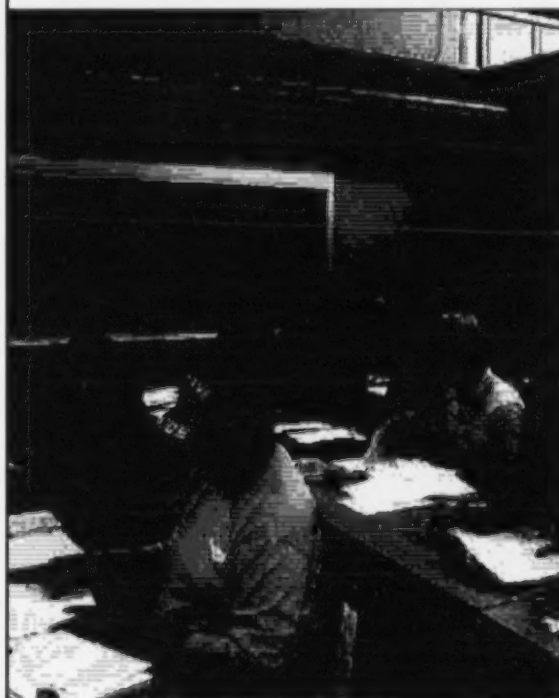
To measure student's preparedness for post-secondary and labour market opportunities, a six-year longitudinal high school exit survey will be developed to track the June 2008 cohort of graduates or those who would have graduated in 2008. The survey results will guide future student financial assistance and labour market programming.

Yukon Youth Connections Program

This initiative will provide career counselling for youth who are not attached to the workforce or the school system. Using a case management system, success will demonstrate an increase of return to work or school on an ongoing basis.

Student Exit Survey

To best address needs in the labour market, it is critical to evaluate and monitor all training programs. A Yukon College student exit survey will be developed to confirm employment outcomes of students who have attended and/or graduated from the college. The data will help to determine which programs will continue to be offered at the college.



Objective 3: Identify and increase local opportunities to fill temporary and long-term labour market shortages

The Labour Market Framework guides the Government of Yukon's approach to develop a productive, skilled workforce to support a sustainable economy. This framework is a comprehensive tool for the implementation of four key strategies that support an inclusive and adaptable labour market. The anticipated outcomes of this objective are a higher qualified workforce, increased employment for under-represented groups, increased effectiveness in meeting labour force needs, and increased support for growing economic sectors.

Key Strategies

2.3.1 Facilitate and synthesize timely, accurate and relevant information on training and program needs to address labour market needs

Generate and update labour market information

The Department will support effective, evidence-based decision-making by collecting and synthesizing high quality information that is current and reflective of national, regional and territorial trends. This will help the Department identify and monitor key labour market changes to ensure governments, employers, and prospective employees are informed and prepared to take full advantage of Yukon's economy.

Increase the awareness and accessibility of labour market information

While valuable labour market information does exist, the information may not be readily and easily available to those who want to access it. Information also requires analysis in order to have value. It is not sufficient to provide aggregate information; rather the information has to be presented with sufficient utility to inform decisions. The aim of this initiative



is to enhance the awareness and accessibility of labour market information for job seekers, employers, governments and non-governmental organizations. High quality information will support planning for training and education, development of employment standards, and adjustment of labour market policies.

2.3.2 Aid Yukon employers to attract and retain suitable employees through strategic recruitment and retention initiatives.

Improve Yukon employers' access to information/tools to support their ability to retain employees

Access to information and tools is necessary to support an employer's ability to incorporate retention practices and develop flexible workplaces. Employer engagement must be central if Yukon businesses want to improve retention strategies. Ongoing professional learning opportunities for employers, through workshops and conferences, are fundamental to reducing employee turnover.



2.3.3 Increase access to comprehensive training and trades initiatives

Community Training Funds

The Department provides community-based funds to allow communities to make their own decisions about their priority training needs. This funding program will continue to support projects that reflect Yukon's labour market priorities.

Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA)

On February 1st, 2010 the LMDA was devolved to the Government of Yukon. Program funding to support unemployed Employment Insurance eligible participants will be reviewed to ensure consistency with Yukon labour market priorities. In addition, the new database/case management system will ensure that there is an employment results measurement system to meet requirements of continued funding.

Labour Market Agreement (LMA)

The LMA funding was initiated in 2009-2010 for five years to provide funding for non-Employment Insurance clients. Programs to assist clients in a variety of labour market areas have proven successful in obtaining employment. Continued funding after the five year term will be contingent on identifying the success of the program to renew future funding.

2.3.4 Support a responsive and sustainable approach to Yukon immigration

Promotion of Yukon as Immigration Destination

The Department will promote Yukon as a destination for immigrants by coordinating efforts with business and tourism marketing. One of the tools will be the expansion of the Department of Education's Immigration web portal. It is anticipated there will be an increased number of nominees who come to Yukon through the Yukon Nominee Program.

Foreign Credential Recognition

Recognizing foreign credentials is an essential step in supporting immigrants in securing employment in their trained fields. The Department will work with





the Government of Canada and other stakeholders to develop a foreign credential recognition program for Yukon. In addition, the Department will create an effective and successful temporary foreign worker initiative with the Government of Canada. These initiatives will increase the number of immigrants who will be able to work in the professions in which they were trained.

Yukon Nominee Program

Currently the Yukon Nominee Program has three streams to attract workers: the Business stream, Skilled Worker stream, and the Critical Impact Worker stream. To proactively address shortages of skilled workers, the Department will research and implement new Nominee Program streams. The purpose is to expand the labour pool and increase the population and skills base of Yukon by examining other possible nominee streams that would address future Yukon labour market needs.





Our Commitment to Accountability: Monitoring and Evaluation

The Department is committed to tracking our progress toward the achievement of our goals and objectives. This was emphasized by the auditor general's report, which encouraged the Department to improve its planning processes. The Auditor General specifically encouraged the Department to improve how it tracks student performance results in order to more effectively address critical gaps and assess the effectiveness of student transitions from public schools to post-secondary education. In this section of the strategic plan, the Department details how it will monitor and evaluate its programs and services to ensure all partners in education understand the tools and processes by which we are assessing our progress. The Department is committed to openness and transparency.

To this end, the Department will monitor and evaluate our activities on an annual basis, reported publicly through the annual report, which is released each fall, to determine how we are succeeding.

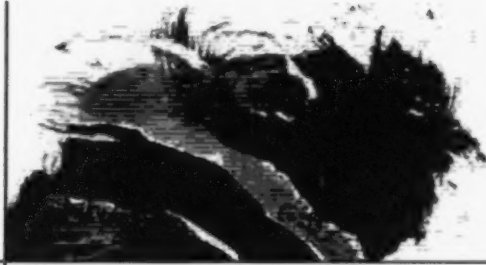
Evaluating Public Schools

Identification, analysis and reporting of student performance results rely on relevant and effective evidence. The Department is committed to tracking our results to ensure we are working toward enhancing the success and achievement of each learner. There are a number of different ways the Department can monitor and evaluate our activities. The most important evidence we have is student achievement data. Using an improved student data information system we will collect,

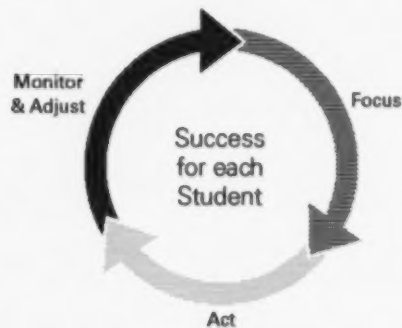
analyze and report performance information to determine our progress in improving outcomes for groups identified by gender or ethnicity, grade groups, and schools. From a baseline established in the 2010-2011 school year the Department will improve outcomes in the following areas:

- graduation/completion rates
- report cards and formative classroom and school level data
- attendance information
- transition rates
- satisfaction and Yukon youth exit surveys
- course pass/fail rates
- standardized assessments

The indicators above represent a group of measures that help the Department assess our program effectiveness. At the same time, the Department recognizes the challenge of using predominately quantitative data and indicators to understand our successes or challenges. However, we must take into consideration other indicators of success that are harder to objectively measure. Examples include: social and emotional development, social responsibility, and level of engagement. Furthermore, we value the professional observations of educators, our learning communities, and advisory committees to help us reflect on, analyze and adjust the ways in which we work so we can benefit all learners. We believe that the strategic



plan, like the school growth process, helps us to focus on the most important work: improving the success for each learner. And we accomplish this by developing strategies and activities to accomplish our goals and objectives and then monitoring and adjusting our progress on a continual basis.



Evaluating Advanced Education

In order to assess performance and results of our adult training, post-secondary, and labour market programs, the Department will collect accurate data on a variety of indicators. Indicators are quantitative or qualitative factors that provide a simple way to measure program achievement. Depending on the program area, the Department uses a logic model to identify indicators for success, methods of data collection, means of verification for the indicators and the key assumptions for the success. This will be undertaken for each of our labour market strategies. Performance indicators include:

- number and percentage of individuals who were certified as journey people
- number of employers accessing the Yukon Nominee Program
- position vacancy rates through the Annual Business Survey

The following performance indicators are currently tracked under the Labour Market Agreement:

- proportion of eligible clients who have completed their intervention, by intervention type
- number of eligible clients who have earned credentials or certification through participation in the intervention
- proportion of eligible clients who, at various intervals throughout the first year following the intervention, are employed
- average hourly earnings of eligible clients following the intervention

A process of implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and adjusting our actions is key to improving our labour market strategies and programs. With the logic model, causal links are identified between the goal, objectives, resources, actions and results.





Logic Model

To ensure accountability for each objective in this strategic plan, the Department will annually assess progress made for each strategy and create an update as part of our annual report.

Implementing the Strategic Plan

The Department has developed an implementation plan to track the annual progress of each initiative to ensure we are working towards our goals and objectives. We will report on our progress in our annual report in the fall, and at the annual New Horizons Education Summit, which takes place during Education Week. The implementation plan provides a more detailed summary of what activities are taking place during each year, the performance indicators and targets, and the resources required to meet the intended outcomes. A key principle with the implementation plan is that monitoring and evaluation are integrated throughout each initiative.





Glossary of Terms

Critical Thinking

Is the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it.

Curriculum

The prescribed learning outcomes for a set of courses or grades.

DART

DART stands for District Assessment Reading Team. The DART is focussed on providing information to teachers on students' reading comprehension and thinking skills. DART is delivered twice a year in Yukon schools to help inform instruction and improve student learning.

Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction involves adjusting (adapting or modifying) teaching and learning to better enable students of various abilities, interests, and special educational needs to successfully complete the curriculum.

English Language Learner

A learner whose primary language is a language other than English, or whose language is a variety of English which is significantly different than that used in the medium of instruction in Yukon schools, and who may require focussed support to attain English language proficiency.

Environmental Scan

An overview of the challenges and opportunities from the external environment that influence the business and priorities of the Department.

Graduation/Completion Rates

Graduation/completion rates are determined by the number of students who finish one of three programs of study: Yukon Graduation Diploma, Adult Graduation Diploma (for students over 19 years of age) and the School Completion Certificate, for students who have fulfilled the requirements for their Individual Education Plan.

Goal

Broad, long-term statement that guides the Department in the direction in realizing the vision; long-term milestones of success.

Initiatives

Specific activities or projects that will implement our strategies.

Key Strategies

Patterns of activities designed to achieve objectives.



Learning Outcome

A learning outcome is a statement of something that students are expected to know and/or do at the end of an indicated grade or course.

Literacy

Literacy is an essential aspect of communication vital to lifelong learning. The definition of literacy has changed in the last decade and is now much broader than simply knowing how to read and write. Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, and communicate using printed and written materials. It involves a continuum of learning, yet oral language skills are its foundation. First Nations languages⁷, French, English language learners and information technology are an integral part of a comprehensive literacy program in order to help students be a contributing citizen in a global world.

Learning Communities

Learning Communities comprise a group, which could include staff, students, parents, and community members, who work towards a common purpose.

Logic Model

A simple picture of a program or initiative that shows the relationships between resources that are invested, the activities that take place, and the changes that result.

21st Century Learner

The 21st century learner is someone who is working towards mastering the essential 21st century learning skills including: critical and analytical thinking skills, problem solving, team work, flexible organization and personal management skills, global awareness and understanding, comfort in operating in current and future electronic environments.

Mandate

A clear, concise definition of the Department's purpose and role. It gives direction to the programs and services in each branch.

Objectives

What we aim to accomplish in the shorter term that precisely identifies the priorities of the Department. Objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely.

Outcome

The results achieved through the impact of an initiative, program, or policy.

Performance Indicator

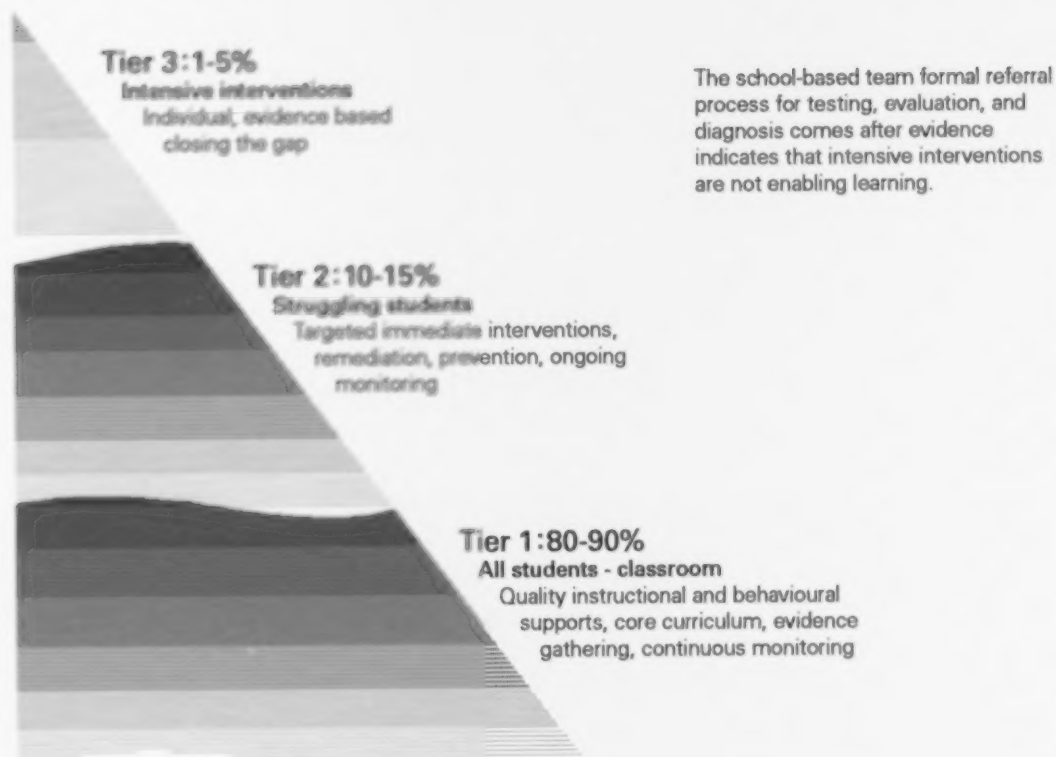
A specific item of information that can be used to track and measure the success of a program or initiative in meeting desired outcomes. Indicators are observable or measurable.

⁷ First Nations languages include: Gwich'in, Hän, Kaska, Northern Tutchone, Southern Tutchone, Tagish, Tlingit, and Upper Tanana.



Pyramid of Intervention

The Pyramid of Intervention is the system of supports that a school provides for its struggling students.



Steps in the pre-referral to referral process



Response to Intervention

Response to Intervention is a method of intervention designed to provide early, effective assistance to children who are having difficulty learning. Response to intervention was also designed to function as a data-based process of diagnosing learning disabilities. This method can be used at the group and individual level and seeks to prevent academic failure through early intervention and frequent progress measurement.

Rubric

A rubric is a scoring tool that teachers use to assess student learning after a lesson. Using a set of criteria and standards directly tied to the stated learning outcomes, educators can assess each student's performance.

School Wide Writes

School Wide Writes is an assessment that helps teachers strengthen students' writing skills through a personal and impromptu writing assignment. It is delivered between Grades 2-9 twice a year and is based on the British Columbia Performance Standards. School Wide Writes focus on assessment for learning to provide meaningful feedback to students about their strengths and to identify their weaker skills in writing.

Summative and Formative Assessment

Summative assessment is assessment of learning. It measures students' competencies and skills and reports their level of learning in relation to the established grade level learning outcomes.

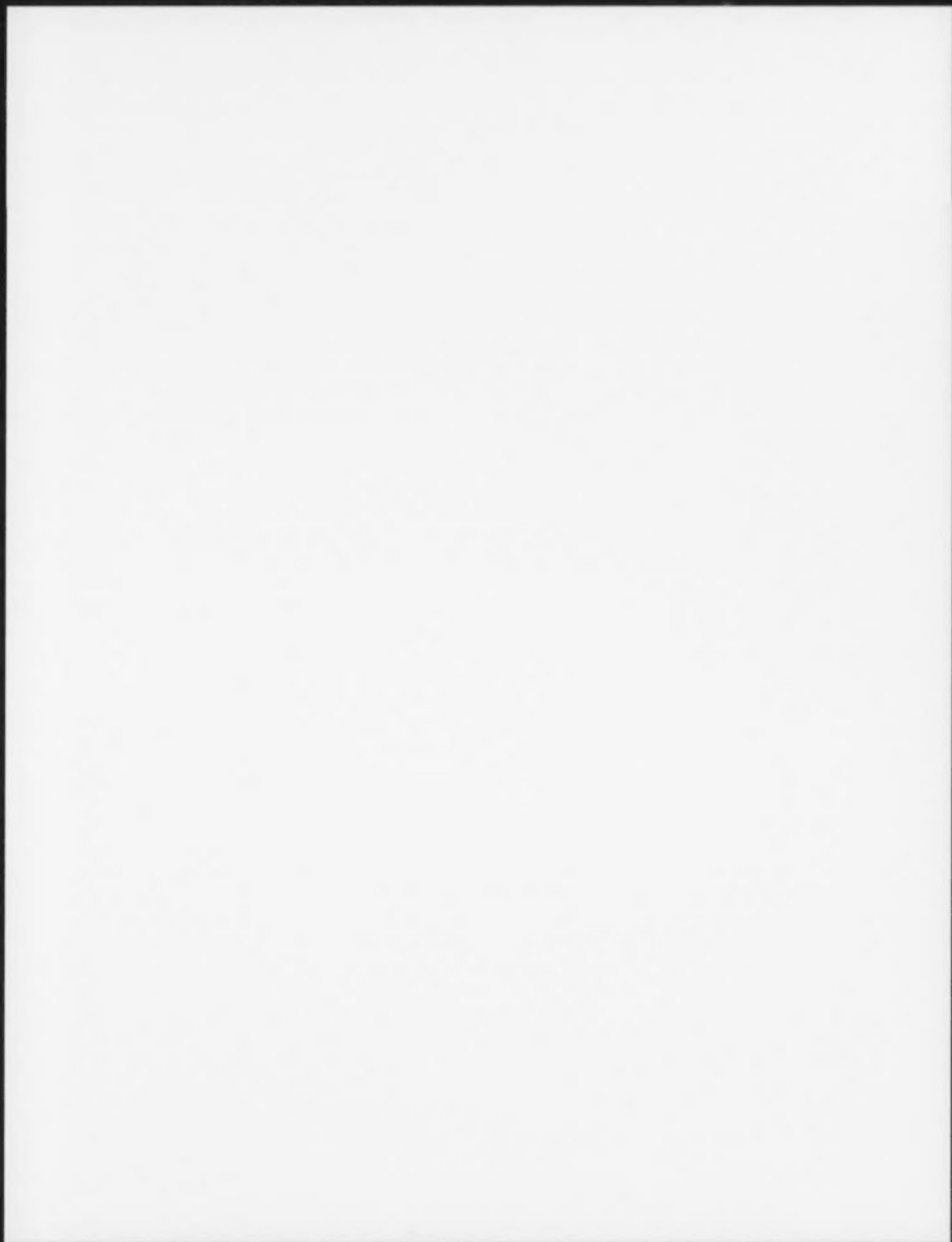
Formative assessment is assessment as and for learning. It is used for ongoing instructional planning and student feedback to help the student identify and meet the specific needs of his/her learning plan.

Values

A set of guiding principles in the form of short phrases that guide behaviour and decision making and set acceptable norms for Departmental staff culture.

Vision

A vision describes a possible and desired future state for the Department, which inspires and guides decisions and actions.





» moving ideas into action

Yukon
Education